

# **Step Study Team Study Guide**

This Study Guide has proven helpful in providing structure and guidance for learning to work the Twelve-Step Program, as it is described in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, in small groups of 8-12 persons. This version is a compilation of three pre-existing guides, all of which were used in actual groups and combined into one by taking the most helpful features from each. This Guide has been used in its present form for approximately 15 years by many groups with only minor changes which primarily dealt with clarification of language, spelling, grammar etc.

# Step Study Teams

## I. Purpose

- a. To provide the person who has not worked the Steps with the motivation and assistance in “working” the Steps.
- b. To provide those who have worked the Steps with an opportunity and motivation to do it again and to share your experience, strength and hope in the benefits of trying to practice these principles.

## II. Plan

- a. Teams of no more than 12 persons will be formed (8 to 10 are preferred). The make-up of each team will be approximately 3 to 5 members who have worked the Steps in the manner described in the Big Book and 8 to 9 members who have never worked the Steps in this manner, but who are willing to try.
- b. Each team will select its own meeting place and meeting time, preferably at a time which does not conflict with normal A.A. meetings. **TEAM MEETINGS ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR A.A. MEETINGS AND FELLOWSHIP!!**
- c. At the preliminary meeting all present will:
  - (1) Exchange telephone numbers and addresses and select a meeting place.
  - (2) **COMMIT TO STAY WITH THE TEAM UNTIL ALL MEMBERS HAVE COMPLETED THE STEPS.**
  - (3) Commit to do the steps according to the Big Book and The Twelve and Twelve.
  - (4) Those persons who have not previously done the Steps will be asked to commit to do them at least once more with another Step Study team after completion of this group. The purpose of this commitment is to get into the habit of “Carrying the Message” and to perpetuate the program of recovery among newer members of Alcoholics Anonymous.
  - (5) Commit to making telephone or personal contact with one or more members of the team during each week for the duration of the study. This is to encourage sharing of problems or experience with the assignment that week.
  - (6) **COMMIT TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS EXCEPT IN RARE AND EXTREMELY UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES. EACH MEMBER REALLY NEEDS TO BE PRESENT EVERY WEEK.** If a member cannot be present, it will be his/her responsibility to call another member and explain what the problem is so that the team will not be delayed. Each team is autonomous and the team’s group conscious should determine whether a member should be dropped for non-commitment. It is important to give the team’s function priority over any one individual.
- d. After the initial meeting (Week 1), no one should be added to the team. If someone has a slip or is not living up to their commitment to the team, the team as a group must decide if they want to allow them to continue with the team.
- e. When the team has completed the Steps, it will disband. The estimated time to complete the steps is 15-20 weeks.

## III. Meeting Format

- a. There is no formal meeting format and each team is free to select its own. Most groups rotate the chairmanship from week to week and simply discuss the assigned material and share their experience in applying it to their lives.
- b. Each member must come to the meeting having read the assignment and studied those portions of the Big Book and /or Twelve and Twelve which relate to the Step under discussion, and having done his /her assignment.
- c. The function of the team will be to help individual members apply the principles of each of the

Twelve Steps in their own life and share their experience in the discussion on each Step.

**d.** It is necessary that each member of the team obtain a study notebook to record his/her notes, assignment, etc.

#### **IV. After Completion**

As teams complete the Steps, new teams will be formed to help newcomers and others who want to participate. A nucleus of experienced members (3-5) should accept new members on a first-come, first-served basis.

#### **V. About Co-ed Groups**

There is no reason why the teams cannot be co-ed, but it is recommended that should they be co-ed, that equal numbers of male/female be included. No problems need be encountered in the Fourth and Fifth Step areas as long as the principles of the program are being followed.

### **Step Study Outline and Assignment Sheet**

The following pages contain a suggested homework assignment and meeting guide for use in the weekly meeting of the Step Study team. The time given for any particular study can be extended or shortened as each team chooses. When the study is completed, each member will have read through chapter seven of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* including the Preface and Forewords to all editions.

This diagram is a handy reference for where the steps are located in the Big Book.

Step 1	The Doctors Opinion Bill's Story There Is A Solution More About Alcoholism
Step 2	We Agnostics
Steps 3-12	How It Works Into Action Working With Others

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND AS YOU ARE WORKING THROUGH THIS STUDY GUIDE THAT EVERYTHING IN IT IS TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE BIG BOOK AND TWELVE AND TWELVE. IT IS INTENDED AS A STUDY AID TO BE DONE IN SMALL GROUPS – NOT AS AN INDIVIDUAL GUIDE TO STEP STUDY FOR AN INDIVIDUAL.

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## WEEK ONE

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Go over pages 1 & 2 of this guide regarding the Purpose, Plan and Meeting Format. It is important that the COMMITMENT section of this outline be carefully reviewed and that every member of the team thoroughly understands that he or she is committing to do the Steps – ALL of the Steps. It is understood that any member could possibly have one or more absences; perfect attendance is not absolutely required but certainly recommended. It is most helpful that everyone be present as much as possible and that communications develop between the team members so that they know how the other team members are progressing and how they are feeling about the team study.

At this first meeting you should determine the following:

1. Definite meeting place and time. Check over the calendar for the upcoming months so if there will be any conflicts with the meeting time (Vacations, Final Four, Derby Week, Holidays, etc.) These should be plotted out in advance so that confusion can be avoided later on.
2. As the meetings are generally held in someone's home, and you all will want coffee, coke, etc., some sort of "kitty" arrangement should be set up at this time to defray expenses.
3. Make sure that everyone understands that for the first few weeks, through week #7, each person will be responsible for writing out on paper his/her comments and reflections on a certain portion of the Big Book. These comments will be read aloud to the group at the next meeting, and will be read verbatim, without ad-libbing.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK TWO:** Read the Preface, Forewords to the First, Second, Third and Fourth Edition plus the Doctor's Opinion. Buy your notebook and write down your own reaction to the material you have read. Your written reaction to the reading assignment will be read aloud to the group verbatim without ad-libbing.

In a separate section of your notebook, begin to write "How I was powerless over alcohol". It is equally important to write any reservations you may have that you are, in fact, powerless over alcohol. This writing will become a running log of your thoughts, memories, identifications etc. as you study through Chapter 4 of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. At each meeting, the team members will read what they have written on powerlessness during that week. It is important that you share your progress, as well as your misgivings, on Step One in the group discussion.

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## WEEK TWO (BEGINNING OF DISCUSSION ON STEP ONE)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Note that the Foreword to the First Edition states: "To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book." Compare this with the language on page 29 at the end of chapter two where it is stated, "Further on, clear cut directions are given showing how we recovered." This is the task this team is about to undertake.

At the beginning of the meeting, each person should read aloud their notes on their reaction to the reading assignment and their writing on "How I am powerless over alcohol." After everyone has read their assignment, The chairperson should read the 6 questions below aloud and open the floor for

discussion. The questions will help stimulate discussion on the material read and help the team members share in terms of their own experience.

1. Were you aware that your illness affected both your mind and your body?
2. Have you ever experienced the phenomena of “Craving”? (page xxvi)
3. Did you reach the point where you could not differentiate the “True from the False”?
4. Did your alcoholic life seem normal to you?
5. The Doctor seems to say that a “Psychic change” must occur. What is a psychic change? (Spiritual awakening?)
6. Can you accept the fact that alcoholism “has never been, by any treatment with which we are familiar, permanently eradicated”?

These and other questions will occur to the group, and each should be discussed at some length if they weren’t discussed in the open discussion portion of the meeting.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK THREE:** Read chapter one, “Bill’s Story,” and write down your reaction to this chapter. Be prepared to discuss this material as it applies to your life. Continue to write how you are powerless over alcohol.

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### **WEEK THREE (CONTINUING DISCUSSION OF STEP ONE)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

At the beginning of the meeting, each person should read aloud their notes on chapter one, “Bill’s Story” and this week’s additions to their writing on “powerlessness.” Next, the chairperson should read the 14 questions below and open the floor for discussion.

1. Did you ever ask, “was I crazy?” ( page 5)
2. Did you ever feel the remorse, horror and hopelessness of the next morning? (page 6)
3. Did you ever seek oblivion? (page 6)
4. Did your mind ever race uncontrollably? (page 7)
5. Did you ever feel lonely? (page 8)
6. Did you ever feel fear? (page 8)
7. What was your reaction to religion, the church and God? (page 10)
8. Note what happened to Bill’s prejudice against “Their God” when he began to apply his own concept of God. (page 12)
9. Did you know that “nothing more was required of me to make my beginning” than willingness or a willingness to believe?
10. Doesn’t Bill essentially take the First through the Eleventh Steps at this time? (page 13)
11. Notice how Bill was instructed to find God’s Will and pray. (page 13)
12. Has your common sense become “uncommon sense”? (page 13)
13. Does Bill take the Twelfth Step? (page 14)
14. Does the program work in all of Bill’s affairs? (page 15)

The foregoing are simply samples of questions that may occur or points that may be raised. What was of particular significance to you in this chapter? What did you find that you could not accept?

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK FOUR:** Read chapter two, “ There Is A Solution,” write down your reactions and be prepared to discuss these reactions. Continue to write how you are powerless over alcohol and begin to write down your thoughts on how your life has become unmanageable.

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## **WEEK FOUR (CONTINUING DISCUSSION OF STEP ONE)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

At the beginning of the meeting, each person should read aloud their notes on chapter two, “There is a Solution” and their writing about “powerlessness and unmanageability.” Next, the chairperson should read the 17 questions below and open the floor for discussion.

1. What parts of the chapter can you apply to your life?
2. What is your reaction to the membership of A.A.?
3. Did your alcoholism “engulf all whose lives touched the sufferer’s” and what was their reaction?
4. Do you see how you can reach another alcoholic? (page 18)
5. Note on page 20, the book answers “What do I have to do?”
6. Have you been asked the questions on page 20 by yourself or others and what were the answers?
7. From your examination of yourself in the past weeks and your reading of this chapter, are you a “Real Alcoholic?”
8. If not, why not? Discuss this with your team.
9. Did you have control over alcohol?
10. Did you do absurd and incredible and tragic things while drinking?
11. Were you a Jekyll and Hyde?

(These questions and observations on page 21 may help you with your writing on powerlessness over alcohol):

12. Why did we drink the way we did? (page 22)
13. Why do we take that one drink? Why can’t we stay on the water wagon?
14. What has become of the common sense and the will power that we still sometimes display on other matters?
15. Did you ask yourself these questions?
16. Had you lost the power of choice described on page 24?
17. Have you ever said “What’s the use anyhow?”

“There Is A Solution” (page 25) “The great fact is just this and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences”. Read and understand the rest of this paragraph and Appendix II because it is an outstanding summary of what happens in the program.

Our alternative to the solution is to “go on blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could or to accept spiritual help”. Note that Appendix II is referred to again on page 27. It is suggested that the chairperson read Appendix II aloud and open a discussion of what it contains.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK FIVE:** Go back to the notes you started on “managing” your life. As thoughts occur to you about whether you can or cannot manage your life, continue to write them down. Read chapter three, “More About Alcoholism,” and write down your reactions.

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## **WEEK FIVE (CONTINUING DISCUSSION OF STEP ONE)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

At this time, each person should read their notes on chapter three, “More About Alcoholism” and their notes on unmanageability. After everyone has read their notes, the chairperson should read aloud the 7

questions below and open the floor for discussion.

1. Did you have the “great obsession”? (page 30)
2. Has your writing in your notebook listed those things you attempted to do to control your use of alcohol and your failure to do so?
3. Did you have reservations of any kind of any lurking notion that you will some day be immune to alcohol? (page 33)
4. Can you identify with the mental states that precede a relapse into drinking?
5. Do you understand that these mental states are the “crux of the problem”? (page 35)
6. Do you understand why an actual or potential alcoholic will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge? (page 39)
7. Note the doctor’s reaction to alcoholism on page 43. Also note the solution at the bottom of page 43.

ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK SIX: Read chapter four, “We Agnostics.” Write down your reactions to the contents of this chapter.

By now you should have completed writing most of your memories about why you are powerless over alcohol and how your life is unmanageable. If you are having difficulty with these assignments, discuss this with the group. Also, your sponsor may be able to help you with this.

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## WEEK SIX (BEGIN DISCUSSION ON STEP TWO)

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

At the beginning of the meeting, each person should read their reactions to chapter four, “We Agnostics.” Then the chairperson should read aloud the 18 questions below and open the floor for discussion.

1. Do you accept the fact that you have only two alternatives if you are alcoholic--an alcoholic death or to live life on a spiritual basis? (page 44)
2. Have you lacked power to manage your life? (page 45)
3. Note that the “main object of the book is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem”.
4. Have you had honest doubts and prejudices about “God”? (page 45)
5. What has been your reaction to the word, “God”?
6. What will God look like, what will it be like when you find God, and where did you get these ideas?
7. Had you abandoned the idea of God entirely? (page 45)
8. Are you willing to lay aside your previous beliefs or prejudices and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than yourself? (page 47)
9. What is your concept of God? (page 47)
10. Do you recognize that when you say “yes” to question number 8, that you are “on the way”? (page 47)
11. Note that the book once again refers you to Appendix II at this point. What is it that Appendix II says that is indispensable?
12. Have you been open-minded or have you been obstinate, sensitive and unreasonably prejudiced about discussion of God? (page 48)
13. Now that you have completed this chapter, what reservations do you have?
14. Have you been biased and unreasonably prejudiced about the “realm of the spirit”? (page 52)
15. Did your ideas work? Will the God idea work? (page 52)

16. Are you really ready to fearlessly face and answer the proposition that “either God is everything or he is nothing”? God either is or he isn’t; what is your choice to be?
17. Do you believe that “when we drew near to God, God disclosed Himself to us?” (page 57)
18. Remember what is written on page 28: If what we have learned and felt and seen means anything at all, it means that all of us, whatever our race, creed or color are children of a living Creator with whom we may form a relationship upon simple and understandable terms as soon as we are willing and honest enough to try.

*Note: Next week, (week seven) begins discussion on Step Three. Make sure that everyone is comfortable with Steps One and Two before you make the transition into Step Three.* You are now at the end of our discussion on Steps One and Two. At this point, the group should decide whether to spend another week and review the first two Steps. Let your group conscience decide.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK SEVEN:** Write in your notebook what you can believe about a power greater than yourself. On another page, write what you cannot believe about God. These will be read aloud in the meeting next week.

As you go forward from this point, it is those things which you believe or which fit into your conception of God which you will be using. You can be comforted in knowing that “our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach and to effect a contact with Him.” (page 46)

Read pages 58 through the third paragraph on page 63 (i.e., through the part which concludes Step Three) of chapter five, “How It Works,” and write down your reactions.

## **WEEK SEVEN (STEP THREE)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Each person should read their reactions to pages 58 through 63 and their writing on what they can and cannot believe about a power greater than themselves. Then the chairperson should read aloud the following 8 questions and open the floor for discussion.

1. Do you question whether you are capable of being honest with yourself?
2. Note the state of mind you are asked to have when you start the Steps—honesty, fearlessness, thoroughness and a willingness to go to any length.
3. What do half measures avail us?
4. Are you convinced that a life based on self-will can hardly be a success? (page 60)
5. Can you see the effects of self-centeredness in your life? How have you been self-centered?
6. Did you know that you could not reduce self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on your own power? (page 62)
7. Are you willing to make the decisions set fourth at the bottom of page 62?
8. Note the promises that follow the taking of Step Three as described at the top of page 63. Are you willing to take this Step?

Many groups at this point commit to one another that they are going to take this Step and then recite the Third Step Prayer together. (page 63)

This is the end of discussion on Step Three. Before proceeding, make sure that all team members are ready to go on to the Fourth Step.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK EIGHT:** Many readers find the instructions for Step Four confusing and complex. The following guide was written to clarify the Forth Step, as it is described in the Big Book, by breaking the process down into its basic components and putting them in order. Those who have taken



this Step in accordance with the instructions given in the Big Book--including the inventory, the analysis, the study and prayer suggested by the book--have found it to be an exciting and rewarding experience. This experience is available to anyone who will complete, to the best of their ability, the following instructions in the order in which they are given.

### **I. The time and purpose of Step Four**

Perhaps the greatest promise of the program of A.A. is that God, as you understand him, will do for you what you cannot do for yourself. This promise carries with it the obvious condition that you must do what you can.

When you have made the decision required by Step 3, the Big Book warns us “though our decision was a vital and crucial Step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face and be rid of the things in ourselves which have been blocking us (from God)...so we had to get down to causes and conditions. Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory.”

### **II. What do we seek?**

The inventory is described as a “fact-finding and fact-facing process.” We are seeking the truth about ourselves and honestly taking stock of our lives. We are to search out the flaws in our makeup which caused our failure.

Throughout the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, it is stated that self, selfishness and self-centeredness were the root of our troubles. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations. These common manifestations are grouped in three categories—resentment, fear and sex/relationships. Each of these is treated separately in the inventory.

### **Inventory of resentments.**

The specific instructions for taking this Step are contained in the Big Book on pages 64 through 71. Weeks 8 through 10 deal with the resentment portion of the inventory. The portion of these instructions which pertain to the assignment for Week Eight is contained in the last three paragraphs on page 64 through the example on page 65. Read those paragraphs now.

### **Preparation**

1. Purchase a spiral notebook and open it so that you have a blank page on both sides of the wire spiral. With a ruler or straight edge, divide each of these pages vertically so that when both pages are divided, you have a total of four columns (see illustration on next page). Turn the page and repeat this process until you divided several pages in this manner.
2. The columns on each page should be labeled as follows:
  - Column 1: Name
  - Column 2: Cause
  - Column 3: Affects my
  - Column 4: Should be left blank for the time being.

Name	Cause	Affects My	

**Resentments—the number one offender**

From these thoughts or mental attitudes “stems all forms of spiritual disease”. We are instructed to list all people, institutions or principles with whom we are angry or had resentments. What is a resentment?

**A.** Webster’s Dictionary defines “resentment” as “indignation or ill will felt as a result of real or imagined offense.” Webster then refers the reader to a word “anger” and gives other examples of this thought or feeling which include rage, ire, wrath, resentment and indignation. These words denote varying degrees of displeasure from anger (strong, intense and explosive) to the longer lasting resentment (ill will and suppressed anger generated by a sense of being wronged or being wrong).

**B.** In summary and broadly defined, we are dealing with a negative or unpleasant thought or feeling caused or generated by the real or imagined act, or failure to act, of a person, institution or principle.

**C.** Persons, institutions or principles may need some explanation. Remember you are a “person” and your action or failure to act may very well cause you to think or feel badly (guilt—a resentment at yourself). Institutions are any group of people—authorities, companies, governmental agencies or other organizations. A principle is a basic truth or law. Many of these basic truths or laws have, and do, offend us. For example:

- Alcoholism is an incurable, progressive disease.
- Honesty is the best policy.
- As you give, you receive (each of us suffers the consequences of his own action—no free lunch).

- When you are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with you, etc.

**Begin writing Step Four**

In column one of your notebook, under “Name”, list the names of the people, institutions and principles which have or do cause you to have resentment as defined above. As you go, write a few words which describe each and every event or circumstance you can recall which causes you to resent the person, institution or principle. This should be written in column 2, under “Cause,” adjacent to each of the names in column 1. This is a very important part of the analysis; we learn from specific events—not from general complaints. For example, we learn very little from the complaint, “he was always lying”, but we learn much from the specific, “he told me he wasn’t married”. See page 64 of the Big Book for an example. Repeat this process for each person, institution and principle for which you have or had a resentment. Column 1 and 2 should be complete for all your resentments before the next team meeting. Certain points should be remembered:

1. If you can remember the resentment, you should list it, even though you think you are “over it”. Go back through your life—“nothing counts but thoroughness and honesty.” If you have taken previous inventories in A.A. and are honestly over the resentments you listed then, don’t rehash them now.
2. A review of family albums, school annuals and the like may help you be thorough. Some people write a short autobiography of their life to assist them in remembering resentments.
3. Do not concern yourself with whether you should or should not have the feeling; just make the list of names and causes—but nothing more at this point.
4. Throughout the taking of Step Five and thereafter, you will recall other people, institutions and principles which have caused these negative thoughts and feelings. You can add to this list at any time, but do not spend too much time worrying about how complete the list is. Simply do the best you can during the week before the next group meeting.

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**WEEK EIGHT (BEGIN STEP FOUR)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss all the material contained in your assignment. Now that we are into the actual writing of the inventory, it is no longer necessary to write down your reactions to the material read. Open discussion should be on the assignment subjects and on columns 1 and 2 of your resentment inventory.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK NINE:** When you have completed listing all your “names” and “causes,” each resentment listed will be analyzed. Step Four will mean very little unless you come to really understand each resentment. The following procedure has proven helpful in this understanding and analysis:

In column 3, opposite each of the events you have listed in column 2, write down why this event or circumstance bothered you. Specifically ask yourself these questions:

- Did it affect my self-esteem (the way I think of myself or want others to think of me)?
- Did it affect my security?
- Did it affect my pocketbook?
- Did it affect my ambition (what I wanted or needed)?
- Was one of my personal relationships affected or threatened?

- Do I have fear in connection with this resentment? If yes, then note the fear in column three and write a short description of the fear so that you analyze it later in the fears portion of your inventory.
- How does this resentment relate to pride, anger, lust, envy, gluttony, sloth or greed?

It is beneficial to write why each of these events or circumstances bothered you in your own words, as opposed to merely doing a checklist from the above. (How was your security affected? How did the event affect the way others think of you, etc?) If the effects listed above do not accurately describe the effect the event had upon you, write a few words to explain how you felt and how you were affected.

COMPLETE COLUMN 3 (THE “AFFECTS MY” ANALYSIS) OF YOUR RESENTMENTS ARISING FROM EACH OF THE EVENTS YOU LISTED IN COLUMN 2 BEFORE GOING FURTHER WITH THE INVENTORY.

### WEEK NINE (CONTINUING STEP FOUR)

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss all the material on the assignment pages and any problems the members of the team may be having in filling out the first three columns in their resentment analysis notebook. The chairperson may ask if anyone would care to talk about one or two of his/her resentments which are on the list. This sometimes serves as an “ice breaker” for some of the shyer members of the team. This also allows the newer members to see that their lists aren’t so bad after all.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK TEN:** Below are instructions for completing column 4 of your resentment inventory.

Read and study the Big Book from the paragraph that begins at the bottom of page 65 through the second paragraph on page 67.

The Beginning Of Growth: As noted earlier, **it is a spiritual axiom that when I am disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with me.** Now that you have listed and understand the resentment and how it affected you, having stopped blaming or “putting out of our mind the wrongs others have done”, you can look for your own mistakes and learn from them. Take the following action:

1. In your notebook, at the top of the fourth column on each page, insert the words “My Faults.”
2. For each person, institution or principle, honestly pray the Fourth Step prayer: “God help me show the same tolerance, pity and patience that I cheerfully grant a sick friend. \_\_\_\_\_ is a sick person; how can I be helpful to \_\_\_\_\_? Save me from being angry. Thy will be done.” From this point forward, we try to avoid retaliation or argument. Then ask yourself these questions:
  - a. Where have I been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking or frightened?
  - b. Where was I to blame?
3. As revealed by the above questions, write a paragraph describing your "faults" in the fourth column (opposite each person, institution or principle and event). You should have completed all four columns for your entire resentment inventory before the next meeting.

If you get stuck or have trouble admitting your faults to yourself, these ten questions based on the reading might help.

1. Did I simply conclude that the other person, institution or principle was wrong and ignore my

- own faults?
2. Did I make matters worse by fighting to have my own way?
  3. Is it clear to me that a life which includes one of these resentments leads only to futility and unhappiness?
  4. Has the resentment ever benefitted me in any way or have I squandered hours thinking about the resentment?
  5. Do I understand that harboring these resentments separates me from the “Sunlight of the Spirit”?
  6. Do I believe my resentments will lead me to the insanity of the first drink, and “with us, to drink is to die”?
  7. Do I see that, while harboring resentment, the world and its people really dominate me?
  8. Putting out of my mind the wrongs others had done, where was I to blame? (The inventory is mine, not the other persons.)
  9. Am I willing to admit my wrongs honestly and to set these matters straight?
  10. Do I recognize that other people have the same problem with life that I have had and many of them are spiritually sick?

You should have completed all four columns for your entire resentment inventory before the next meeting. Ask yourself these questions about each resentment and each event causing it:

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### **WEEK TEN (CONTINUING STEP FOUR)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

At the meeting, discuss the assignment. Everyone should now have completed the “resentment” portion of the Fourth Step inventory. In most groups, there are one or two members who are behind at this point and will need help. Please do not make a big deal of this—it is normal. Remember, you each committed to stay with the Step until all are caught up. Discuss the Step to this point. See what you, as a group, can do to assist those who are behind.

Keep in mind that the fourth column of the resentment section is the self-analysis in which you identify your fault in the resentments and appropriately titled The Beginning Of Growth on the assignment sheet. Open the discussion on “Resentments”, the “number one offender”—we must be rid of them or they will kill us.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK ELEVEN:** Now that the resentment portion of the Fourth Step is complete, we will begin working on the fear inventory. Read from the third paragraph appearing on page 67 of the Big Book through the first three full paragraphs on page 68. Then take the following action:

I. Fear defined. Webster’s Dictionary defines fear as a feeling of alarm or disquiet caused by the expectation of danger, pain, disaster or the like (being found out, being known for what you know or think you are). The Big Book tells us that the driving force in the life of most alcoholics is the self-centered fear that we will lose something we have or that we will not get something we need or want. Therefore, it is important to recognize when fear is affecting our thoughts and actions. In effect, you have begun to identify how fear has adversely affected you when you described what was affected in you by each of your resentments (if your security is threatened, you fear the loss of whatever makes you feel secure; if your relationships are threatened, you fear losing something you value in your relationships; if your ambition is affected, you fear not getting something you want etc.). Even when we have experienced real loss or hurt, the fears associated with loss of control usually have a greater impact on us than the actual loss. This being so, the third column of your resentment inventory is a good place to start identifying fears and their affects on you. Also remember, in

the assignment for week nine, you have already asked yourself if you had other fears in connection with your resentments.

II. Listing of Fears. In your notebook, following the section on resentments, make a list of fears you have experienced throughout your life. Take each of the fears from the resentment section of your Fourth Step and list them. Then complete the list of times, places and circumstances which evoke this feeling (i.e. fear of growing old, intimacy, death, looking foolish, snakes, bugs, heights, the opposite sex, confrontation, etc.).

III. Analysis of Fear. Having listed each of the fears, we should now write a short analysis of these fears in our effort to understand them. The Big Book tells us that each of these fears set in motion chains of circumstances which brought about or caused us misfortune.

With regard to each, write a short paragraph answering these questions:

1. When did this fear occur?
2. Why do I have this fear?
3. Did you feel you could handle the situation as you saw it?
4. Do you have this fear because self-reliance failed?
5. If you could not handle the situation, who should you rely on?
6. Can you cite examples where this fear set chains of circumstances in motion which brought about misfortune?
7. How does this fear relate to selfishness or self-centeredness?

IV. Study and Prayer. When our fears have been listed and the above questions answered, the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* gives us the solution to fear in the second and third paragraphs on page 68. We are also given a short prayer in which we ask “Him to remove our fears and direct our attention to what He would have us be”. This solution and prayer should be directed toward each of your fears.

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## **WEEK ELEVEN (FEAR INVENTORY PORTION OF STEP FOUR)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss your accomplishment on this part of the inventory process with each other. If possible, urge one of the bolder members to discuss some of the “fears” he/she has written down. Again, this may be the “ice breaker” to bring out some comments from the newer members.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK TWELVE:** Begin Sex/Relationships portion of your inventory. This aspect of the inventory is covered in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* from the last paragraph on page 68 through the end of chapter five. This material should be read at this point.

I. Scope of Inventory. This portion of the inventory begins by clearly discussing sexual relationships. However, in the last sentence of the last paragraph ending on page 70, it states “we have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct and are willing to straighten out the past if we can”. This sentence indicates a broader view of our relationships. It is important and it is therefore suggested that we review our relationship with each of the important people in our lives, as well as, all sexual relationships.

II. Preparing a List of Relationships. Following fears in your inventory book, list the names of the persons to be studied. These should include both sexual and other relationships including family, business, friends, etc.

III. With respect to each person named on your list of relationships, write a short paragraph which answers the following questions: (Remember to be specific)

1. Was I selfish in this relationship?
2. Was I dishonest in this relationship?
3. Was I inconsiderate in this relationship?
4. Whom did I hurt?
5. Did I arouse jealousy?
6. Did I arouse suspicion?
7. Did I arouse bitterness?
8. Was I at fault?
9. What should I have done?

IV. Study and Prayer. Through study and prayer, we seek to shape sane and sound ideals for our future sex life and our relationships. Whatever our ideals turn out to be, we must be willing to grow toward them. We must be willing to make amends for past wrongs, providing we do not bring about still more harm in so doing. In prayer and meditation we ask God what we should do about each specific matter, and we are told the right answer will come if we want it.

On page 70, in the first paragraph, we are given instructions on how to proceed toward our new ideal.

In summary, we are told to “pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity and for strength to do the right thing.” In these troublesome areas we are told to throw ourselves into helping others.

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## **WEEK TWELVE (COMPLETE STEP FOUR- SEX/RELATIONSHIPS)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss all the material spelled out in the assignment sheet for this week.

Your writing on sex should only be discussed in generalities. No specifics or war stories are needed, lest matters of pride and self-centeredness become involved in the meeting.

Discuss your accomplishments at this point.

Reread the last two paragraphs of chapter five in the Big Book. It is also helpful to read chapter four of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions at this point.

Review your inventory. Have you left out anything? Have you failed to list any event or subject, the memory of which, causes you to be uncomfortable? If so, you should write it down now.

Perhaps one of the more experienced members would like to bring out one of his/her “most embarrassing” points of an earlier inventory—just to give an example of how silly some of that “stuff” was we had hidden so long.

Make sure everyone is ready to go on to the next Steps. The group may decide to take another week or two on the inventory process if some members are not caught up.

**Congratulations! You have completed Step Four!!** Aren't you glad you stuck it out?

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK THIRTEEN:**

1. Read pages 72 through the first full paragraph on page 75 in chapter six, "Into Action" of the Big Book.
2. Find someone with whom to take the Fifth Step and set a definite date for taking it with that person.

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**WEEK THIRTEEN (STEP FIVE)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss pages 72 through 75 of "Into Action". Does everyone agree that now is the time to take the Fifth Step? Does anyone have any reservations about taking this Step?

Has everyone made a definite appointment to take the Fifth Step? (It should be completed before the next meeting)

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK FOURTEEN:**

1. Read the first two paragraphs on page 76 of the Big Book.
2. Read chapters six and seven in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

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**WEEK FOURTEEN (STEPS SIX & SEVEN)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the two paragraphs on page 76 of the Big Book and also the material you read in chapters six and seven of the *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

Each member of the team should now have a list of his/her character defects which have been recognized through the study and participation in Steps 4 and 5. These are the things which "stand in the way of your usefulness to your fellows", and which "separate you from the Grace of God".

Do you have any character defects which do not stand in the way of your usefulness to you fellows?

Discuss willingness and humility and what they mean in the context of the Steps.

Do you feel that you can remove your character defects by just trying to do so? Can you do it by yourself?

There is a powerful prayer (Seventh Step Prayer) in paragraph two on page 76 of the Big Book. Make sure everyone is aware of it and encourage them to try it in private.

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK FIFTEEN:**

Read the third paragraph on page 76 of the Big Book. Read chapter 8 of *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. Create a list of people you have harmed. Note that the reading in the big book assumes you will include the names of everyone from your Fourth-Step inventory. If you have harmed anyone who was not included in your Fourth-Step inventory, you should add them to your Eighth-Step list now.



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## **WEEK FIFTEEN (STEP EIGHT)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the material you have read in the Big Book and *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* on Step Eight.

1. Do you agree that everyone on your Fourth-Step inventory should be included on your Eighth-Step list? (page 76)
2. Step Eight in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* reminds us that now is the time when we should redouble our efforts to make an unsparing survey of the wreckage we have left in our wake (p.77), is there anyone you have harmed who is not on your inventory? Discuss this with the group.

### **ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK SIXTEEN:**

1. Read from the third paragraph on page 76 through the middle of page 84 of the Big Book.
2. Read Step Nine in *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*
3. Before the next group meeting, go over each of the names on your Eighth-Step list with your sponsor. With your sponsor's guidance, review each case, one by one, to determine whether your making amends would harm that person or someone else. Categorize the names on your list into three groups: (1) those who can be approached with amends immediately, (2) those cases where action ought to be deferred, (3) those cases where you cannot make restitution at all.
4. Begin making amends as soon as possible. It is a good idea to review each case with your sponsor shortly before making the amends. This will help you stay aware of what your true motives are and avoid further harm to anyone.

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## **WEEK SIXTEEN (STEP NINE)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the material you have read in the Big Book and *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* on Step Nine.

1. Have you any misgivings about Step Nine? (page 76)
2. Do you feel afraid, uneasy or anxious about going to some of these people? Talk about it in the group.
3. What is your real purpose in doing this Step? (page 77)
4. Is timing important in this Step?
5. Can you approach the people on your Eighth-Step list in a helpful and forgiving spirit? (page 77)
6. Do you recognize that nothing worthwhile can be accomplished until you clean your side of the street? (page 78)
7. Is it important that you be praised for your Ninth-Step efforts? (page 78)
8. Do you understand the importance of losing your fear of creditors? (page 78)
9. Have you discussed with your sponsor any criminal offenses you may have committed and which may still be open? If not, you certainly should do so. (See page 79)
10. Do you understand how your Ninth Step may harm other people? (page 79)
11. Have you studied your domestic troubles and the harm that may have been caused in these areas?
12. Do you understand the importance of not creating further harm by creating jealousy and resentment in a "tell all" session? (page 81)

13. What does the author mean when he says the spiritual life is not a theory—we have to live it? (page 83)
14. Do you see that, in taking the Ninth Step, you should be sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping? (page 83)
15. Are you experiencing the promises set fourth on pages 83 and 84 of the Big Book?

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK SEVENTEEN:**

1. Read the remaining text of chapter 6 in the Big Book. Step Ten discussion begins at the second full paragraph on page 84. Step Eleven begins at the bottom of page 85.
2. Chapters ten and eleven of the *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* should also be read.

**WEEK SEVENTEEN (STEPS TEN & ELEVEN)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the material you have read on Steps 10 and 11.

1. What are the specific instructions outlined for the taking of Step Ten?
2. Is Step Ten only to be taken in the morning and in the evening “upon retiring”?
3. What do we watch for?
4. Note that “by this time sanity will have been returned—we will seldom be interested in liquor”. (page 84) Is this the sanity referred to in Step Two?
5. What is the proper use of will power? (page 85)
6. What is the suggestion for taking the Eleventh Step on a daily basis?
7. What do you watch for?
8. Do you practice this Step on a daily basis?
9. Do you follow the procedure outlined on pages 86 & 87 regarding your daily morning meditations and the way you proceed through your day?
10. Has your attitude about a power greater than yourself changed since you studied the chapter, “To the Agnostics”?

**ASSIGNMENT FOR WEEK EIGHTTEEN:**

Read chapter seven in the Big Book, “Working With Others”.

**WEEK EIGHTTEEN (STEP TWELVE)**

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CHAIRPERSON \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss chapter seven. Discuss “Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps”. Discuss the following questions:

1. What are the step-by-step requirements for a Twelfth Step? Have you tried it?
2. Share your experience with the group. In cases where the alcoholic has not responded, have you worked with his family?
3. Did you offer them your way of life and what were the results in this situation?
4. Do you believe that you should “burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone? The only condition is that he trust in God and clean house?”
5. What are the principles we are to practice in all our affairs? Discuss these principles.

6. Why does Bill say, “All our affairs”? What does this mean to you?
7. How can you apply the Twelve Steps outside the meeting rooms? Do you do it?
8. What are some of your daily practices in life to grow in sobriety and spirituality?

Chapter eight, “To The Wives”, chapter nine, “The Family Afterwards”, chapter ten, “to employers”, and chapter eleven, “A Vision For You” are all chapters to teach you how to practice these principles in all your affairs. These chapters contain many spiritual truths which apply to all of us and should be read. Your group may decide whether or not you wish to discuss one or more of these chapters to conclude your Step study. A reading by the chairperson of the last paragraphs starting with “Still you may say...” on page 164 is a fitting way to end your Step Study Team.

Page 133 says, “We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous and free”. You have found the way.